

COUNTY: Norfolk

SITE NAME: TRINITY BROADS

DISTRICT: Great Yarmouth District, and within the Broads Authority Executive Area

Status: Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) notified under Section 28 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)

Local Planning Authority: Great Yarmouth Borough Council and the Broads Authority

National Grid Reference: TG 455133 to 477168 Area: 314.49 (ha)

Ordnance Survey Sheet 1:50,000: 134 1:10,000: TG 41 SE, SW and NE

Date Notified (Under 1949 Act): – Date of Last Revision: –

Date Notified (Under 1981 Act): 24 August 1998 Date of Last Revision:

Other Information:

The site is wardened by the Broads Authority with the support of the Essex and Suffolk Water Company.

Reasons for Notification:

The Trinity Broads comprise a series of five shallow, inter-connected lakes with fringing reedswamp, wet woodland and fen, occupying the upper reaches of the Muckfleet in a side valley of the River Bure. The site supports a rich assemblage of aquatic plants, wet carr woodland, swamp communities, breeding and wintering birds and invertebrates, including many which are nationally rare or scarce.

The Muckfleet system is isolated from the main River Bure by control structures, allowing the Trinity Broads to sustain a water quality and aquatic flora which is better than that found in a majority of other Broads in the Natural Area. The open water areas support the nationally rare holly-leaved naiad *Najas marina*, the nationally scarce hairlike pondweed *Potamogeton trichoides*, and other notable species such as flat-stalked pondweed *P. friesii*. The Trinity Broads are one of the few systems clean enough to sustain a charophyte flora, with *Chara globularis* and *C. vulgaris var. contraria* present.

The open water is surrounded by extensive areas of fringing reedswamp dominated by common reed *Phragmites australis*, with smaller stands of reedmace *Typha latifolia*, true bullrush *Scoenoplectus lacustris* and saw sedge *Cladium mariscus*. The fringing vegetation supports a nationally rare swamp community characterised by abundant common reed and milk parsley *Peucedanum palustre*, which is itself nationally scarce. The fringing vegetation also supports the nationally scarce cowbane *Cicuta virosa*, the regionally important greater spearwort *Ranunculus lingua*, and localised stands of a nationally rare fen meadow community characterised by blunt-flowered rush *Juncus subnodulosus* and marsh thistle *Cirsium palustre*.

Between the reedswamp and the dry upland fringe there are extensive stands of nationally important wet carr woodland dominated by alder *Alnus glutinosa* and grey willow *Salix cinerea*, with downy birch *Betula pubescens* also present. The wet woodland fringe varies in extent, from large blocks of old carr over former open fen, to a thin band of wet woodland between the open water and the surrounding farmland.

The open water areas support nationally important numbers of breeding wildfowl including pochard, tufted duck and shoveller. Small numbers of gadwall also breed. The site is also very important for wintering wildfowl – between November and March nationally important numbers of pochard, shoveller, tufted duck and smew gather. Smaller numbers of gadwall, goldeneye, teal, goosander and Slavonian grebe are regularly recorded.

The site is regularly used by wintering bittern, while marsh harriers breeding on adjacent fenland use the site extensively as a feeding ground. Other notable birds present include Cetti's warbler and kingfisher.

The nationally rare swallowtail butterfly *Papilio machaon* breeds on the site, while the nationally rare Norfolk hawker dragonfly *Aeshna isosceles* breeds in the vicinity and uses the Trinity Broads extensively as a feeding area. Two rare Red Data Book flies have been recorded, *Dolichopus laticola* and *Hydrophorus viridus*, along with the rare shiny ramshorn snail *Segmentina nitida* and the nationally scarce hairy dragonfly *Brachytron pratense*.

Otters *Lutra lutra* are regularly recorded on the site.